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Islamic Studies - Final

Question No. 1

What is the difference between Deen and Religion? Describe the importance of Deen in human life with arguments.

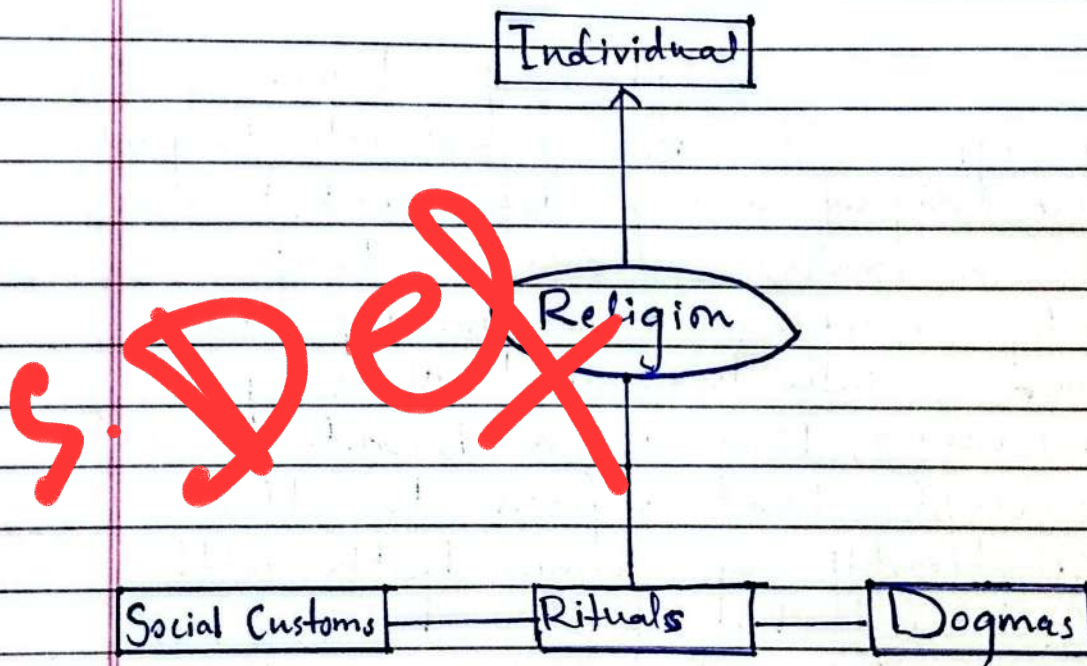
I. Introduction

The concepts of Deen and Religion although used interchangeably are significantly different. Religion is a narrow concept that only signifies a relationship between an individual and their god whereas, Deen is a broader concept that refers to the relationship of man both with God and his fellow human beings. Islam is both a religion and Deen as it is a complete code of life. Deen has immense significance in human life as it guides man in every dimension of life ranging from social life to politics, and

even economies.

II. Defining Religion

Religion comes from root word 'religare' which means to 'bind' or 'tie together'. Hence, religion refers to a bond between God and a religious devotee. It only consists of rituals, dogmas, and few social customs.



III. Defining the Concept of Deen

Deen is a comprehensive term that refers to the complete code of life enjoined upon Muslims by Allah. It

concerns the spiritual, social, political, economic, and legal aspects of life.

IV. Differentiating between Religion And Deen

There are various differences between religion and Deen as elaborated:

A. Narrow Vs. Comprehensive Scope

Religion contains a narrow scope as it only concerns few religious dogmas, rituals, and social customs. Whereas, Deen not only concerns about the spiritual dimensions of human life but also the socio-politico-economic and self legal aspects.

B. Individual vs. Collective Matter

Religion only concerns the relationship between man and God. Whereas, Deen regards both the relationship between man and God and the fellow human beings.

C. Objective of Individual Salvation vs. Collective Welfare

Religion is only concerned about individual welfare and an individual's salvation in life. On the other hand, Deen aims for collective welfare of the entire society as illustrated in the societal character.

D. Polytheism vs. Monotheism

Religion can involve belief in multiple gods. For instance, Hinduism has multiple gods for multiple purposes. Krishna is their god for protection whereas, Ganesha is god of wisdom. In contrast, Deen consists of belief in only one God i.e. Allah.

"I am the only Rab of the Universe." [Al-Quran]

E. Conservative vs. Rational Approach to Life

Religion has a conservative approach as it does not accept any rational thinking rather only

demands an unquestioned devotion. In contrast Deen encourages rational thinking and allows individuals to critically analyze every matter even within Deen.

F. Discouraging Scientific Discovery vs. Encouraging it

Religion discourages scientific discoveries. For instance, Galileo was imprisoned for his discovery i.e. the earth revolves around the sun which went against the Christian teachings. Deen encourages scientific discoveries as Quran says:

"Say, O Prophet! 'O humanity! Travel throughout the universe and explore how Great your Lord is.'"

IV. Importance of Deen in Human Life

Deen has pivotal significance in human life as it guides and shapes every aspect of human life.

A. Deen Provides Guidance to Mankind: Spiritual and Moral

Deen serves as a comprehensive guide forbidding vices and morally inappropriate behaviors and encourages ethically acceptable behavior such as integrity, sincerity, and modesty.

"Surely, this Quran guides to that path which is most upright....."
[Al-Quran]

B. Deen as a Source of Spiritual Satisfaction

There is a significant level of spiritual satisfaction in the recitation of Quran and performing religious obligations regularly.

"Verily in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest."
[Al-Quran]

C. Deen Provides Protection Against Evil

Deen protects man from evils as remembrance of God inculcates a fear which serves as a deterrent, protecting from sinful activities and other social evils.

"Thus does Allah make clear His commandments to man so that they may guide against evil." [Al-Quran]

D. Inculcates a Sense of Unity and Brotherhood

Deen unites all Muslims into a bond of one Ummah despite any ethnic or linguistic differences. Sharing common religious obligations such as Fasting, pilgrimage etc. the Muslims remain one community despite geographical distances.

"The Muslims are but one brotherhood, so make peace between your brothers. And be mindful of Allah, so you may be shown mercy." [Al-Quran]

E. Deen Lifts Man from Darkness into Enlightenment

Deen has transformed man's life from the darkness of ignorance and evils to the light of morality and piety.

F. Deen Induces Piety in Man

Deen inculcates Taqwa in Man as the fear of Allah and the love of Islam keeps individuals away from vices and encourages them to abide by the Rules of Deen.

• VI. Conclusion

Religion and Deen are two distinct concepts. Religion is a narrow concept that consists of God Man's relation with God only and concerns the spiritual dimension only. Whereas, Deen is a broader concept that concerns man's relations not only with God but also fellow humans. It contains all aspects of human life, be they social, economic, political, legal, or spiritual. Hence, Deen is a complete code of life. The importance of Deen is immense in human life as it guards against evil, guides to the right path, induces piety, and creates unity among Muslims.

Question No. 5

Describe the rights of women in Islam in the context of current way of feminist movements.

I. Introduction

The current ^{wave} ~~way~~ of feminist movements seeks to uphold women rights in both the public and private spheres including their right to ~~st~~ education, political representation, and ending gender pay gaps. Islam has provided comprehensive rights to women in every aspect of life keeping in view her ~~vulnerabilities~~. These rights cover almost all the rights sought in the modern feminist movements. However, Islamic rights for women diverge from ~~some~~ of the radical feminist strands as Islam aims to achieve a balance and moderation in society essential for harmony.

II. An Overview of the Current Wave of Feminist Movements

The current wave of

feminist movements seeks equal rights for women including the right to education, equal gender pays, political representation, end to gender-based harassment at workplaces, bodily autonomy, and women's consent in critical life decisions. This wave is described as 'Fourth' wave of feminism and seeks women's equal rights in both the private and the public spheres. However, Islam provides all these rights in a moderate and balanced way as follows:

III. Islam Provides Comprehensive Rights to Women in All Spheres of Life

Islam provides comprehensive rights as an infant, adult, as a wife, and a mother.

A. Right to Life and Dignity

Islam provided complete right to life and honor to women as it ended the practice of female infanticide.

"And when the female infant

is questioned — for what crime she was killed..." [Al-Quran]

B. Right to Education

Islam has provided women the right to education which is also demanded in the current feminist movements seeking enhanced literacy rates for women.

"Seeking knowledge is mandatory for every Muslim." [Hadis]

C. Marriage Rights

i) Right to Consent

Islam has ~~made~~ it mandatory to seek a woman's consent for marriage without which the marriage stands invalid.

"A previously married woman shall not be married unless she is consulted and a virgin shall not be married before her permission is sought." [Hadis]

ii) Right to Dowry and Khula

Islam has granted women the right to get a dowry which is a marriage gift given by the husband as a sign of honor and love. Women in Islam also have the right to end their marriage in certain cases. Hence, women enjoy full rights as a wife.

"The best of you are those who are best to their wives."
[Hadis]

D. Economic Rights

i) Right to Employment

There are no prohibitions on the employment of women if need be in Islam. For instance, Hazrat Khadija was a successful business woman. Hence, women have the right to employment.

ii) Right to Ownership: Property, Wealth, Assets

Women have absolute right independently own her own wealth, property, and assets. There are no restrictions on the ownership of wealth and property by a woman as opposed to patriarchal culture practiced in the contemporary times.

iii) Right to Inheritance

~~After Women~~ Women have an equal right to inheritance and she can inherit wealth or property from her parents, spouse, siblings etc.

"For men is a share of what their relatives leave. For women is a share of what their relatives leave....."

[Al-Burhan]

E. Political Rights

Women have due political rights in Islam as she is allowed to vote, can participate in political activities and take part in political discourse.

Once a woman argued with Hazrat Umar in mosque and proved her point and caused him to declared in the presence of people: "A woman is right and Umar is wrong."

F. Spiritual and Moral Equality

Women and men are equal in the eyes of Allah except for piety and good deeds.

"The most noble in the eyes of God is the one with the most noble character."

IV. Divergence between Islam and Contemporary Feminist Movements

Islam diverges from current feminist movements only in the content of extremist slogans which appear highly radical. Radical feminists demand absolute gender neutrality but Islam supports gender complementarity. Modern feminists deny the role of biological characteristics absolutely in determining gender role, but Islam has a moderate

which acknowledges the distinctiveness of women and her role.

V. Conclusion

Modern feminist movements seek equal rights for women including their right to economic participation, political representation, free choice in marriage, and protection from harassment. Islam advocates for all these rights of women. Islam supports women's right to education, her right to own and inherit property, right to dignity and protection. Islam only diverges from the contemporary feminist movements when it comes to the radical tendencies of the feminist movements.

Question No. 3

Define Shariah and its different sources. Highlight the importance of Ijma in the light of Quran and Sunnah.

I. Introduction

Shariah denotes the Islamic way of life as mandated by Allah. All the laws and guidelines regulating the life of a Muslim come within the scope of Shariah. There are multiple sources of Shariah law including primarily the Quran and Sunnah and the secondary sources are Ijma, Qiyas and Ijtihad. Ijma holds pivotal significance in Shariah as it is the third source of Islamic laws which prevents innovations (biddah) and keeps the Muslims united.

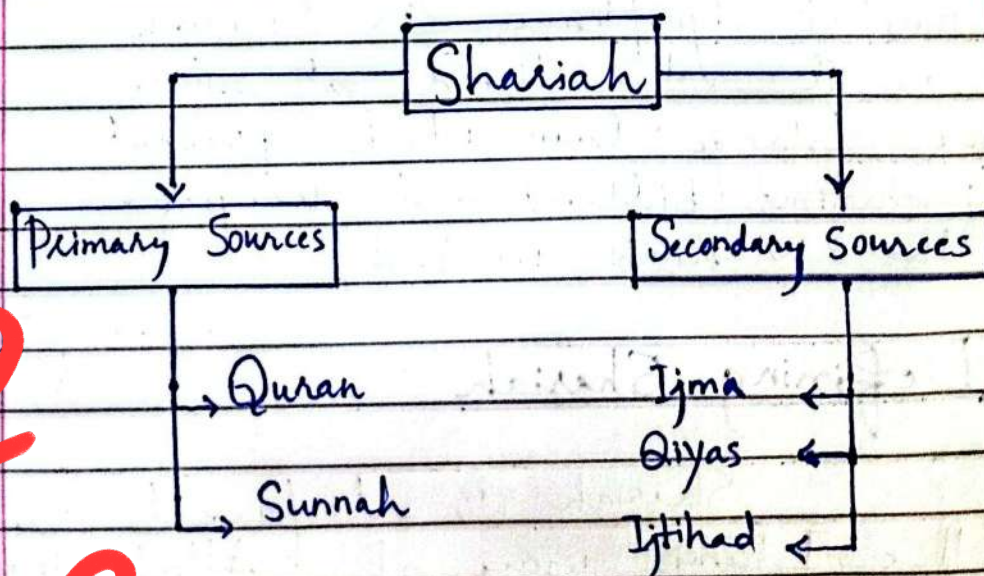
II. Defining Shariah

Shariah is defined as the Islamic way of Allah's life

ordained by Allah for Muslims which governs the social, political, spiritual, and all other aspects of life. Shariah encompasses the Islamic laws, the general guidelines, and all the moral principles in Islam which guide the Muslims' behavior.

III. Sources of Shariah

There are five prominent sources of Shariah. Quran and Sunnah being the primary sources, and Qiyas, Ijma, and Ijtihad being the secondary sources.



A. Quran

Quran is the foremost source of Islamic law or Shariah. All other sources of Shariah derive their rulings from Quran and are dependent on Quranic commandments.

"Surely this Quran guides to that which is most upright."
[Al-Quran]

B. Hadis

It is the second primary source. This source refers to the sayings, actions, and silent approvals of the prophet over any issue. When any Quranic commandment or principle needed further elaboration, Hadis/Sunnah came into play. For instance, the details of ablution for prayer were elaborated on in Hadis.

C. Ijma

Ijma refers to consensus of the Islamic scholars on a particular issue that arises wherein

Quran and Hadis do not explicitly provide guidance.

The Quran was compiled using the consensus of the companions after the death of the prophet (PBUH)

D. Qiyas

This source of Shariah applies existing rulings to new issues with identical underlying causes. For instance, wine was explicitly prohibited in Islam and this ruling was extended to prohibit all other drugs that cause intoxication.

E. Ijtihad

Ijtihad refers to the act of applying independent judgement by an expert Islamic jurist to derive new rulings from the other sources of law particularly Quran and Hadis. This ensures flexibility and adaptability of Shariah to changing scenarios.

When the prophet (PBUH) appointed Muja'ib ibn Jabbar as

the governor of Yemen and asked him as to how he would judge matters, he replied:
"I will judge by the book of Allah; if it is not in the book of Allah then I will judge by the Sunnah; if it is not in Sunnah then I will exercise my own judgement."

The prophet approved Mu'aj's response and praised him.

IV. Importance of Ijma in the Light of Quran and Hadis

A. Quranic Basis for Ijma

The legality of Ijma is primarily derived from the Quran injunction which says:

".....and consult them in affairs of the moment." [Al-Quran]

B. Hadis' Basis for Ijma

There are multiple ahadis which endorse the legality of Ijma as a valid source of Shariah such as:

"If anything comes to you for decision, decide according to the book of Allah; If anything comes which is not in the book of Allah then look to the Sunnah of the Prophet; If anything comes which is not in the Sunnah of the Prophet, then look to what people ~~a~~ unanimously agree upon."

V. Why Ijma is Important

A. Sustains Unity Among Muslims

Ijma maintains and strengthens unity among Muslims as it prevents fragmented laws or rulings on new issues arising which could create controversies.

B. Prevents Innovations in Islamic Law

Ijma prevents innovations (Bid'ah) in Islamic laws with changing times, as it provides collective consensus on new issues according to Quran and Sunnah.

"If anyone goes astray from

the community even by a hand's span, he has removed the noose of Islam from his neck." [Hadis]

C. Provides Adaptability and Flexibility in the Changing Times

Ijma enables the application of Islamic laws to new scenarios arising on which Quran and Hadis are silent. Hence, it ensures the viability of Islamic laws in changing times and eras.

D. Prevents Any Misjudgements

Ijma as a formal source becomes binding on all members of a community, hence, it refrains from ~~committing~~ making any misjudgements regarding any issues.

"My followers will never agree on an error." [Hadis]

VI. Conclusion

Shariah refers to the Islamic way of life mandated by Allah for the Muslims. The multiple sources of Shariah include

Quran, Hadith, Qiyas, Ijma and Ijtihad
which collectively ensure that no
issue remains without an Islamic
ruling for it. Ijma hold pivotal
significance as it strengthens
unity among Muslims, prevents
innovation, and keeps Shariah
relevant even in changing times.